



Alissa Nixon, left, and Daniel Fink, right, hammer away in woodworking club with the help of SAS assistant Cindy Weiskopff. Parents can use their free Deployment Care Card hours for care at any Schweinfurt CYS facility.

### ***IMCOM support allows no-cost childcare during deployments***

**SCHWEINFURT, Germany** – It is no secret that deployments place added stress on families. While trying to remain strong for their deployed spouse, those left behind often must be both mother and father.

To help reduce that stress, the USAG Schweinfurt Child and Youth Services program recently began offering Deployment Care Cards. The cards entitle eligible patrons to 10 free hours of child care per child per month for three months.

“The card is done to assist families during times of deployment,” said Bonnie Cornelison, CYS coordinator at Schweinfurt.

The no-cost care is available to families with children in the USAG Schweinfurt community – regardless of whether or not they have a deployed family member.

Because of this, “people are delighted, but also a bit confused,” said Kristina Davis, a program operation specialist for Schweinfurt’s CYS. That confusion often is related to the idea that nothing is ever really free; a fact that holds true even in this situation. The program, while free to parents, is subsidized by the Army with CYS funds.

“We get additional funds from IMCOM-Europe and from IMCOM because we are in a deployment state,” Davis said. “They provide us with a lot of extra support.”

That extra support, and some close budget management, allowed the Schweinfurt CYS program to implement the Deployment Care Card. Eligible participants can pick up a Deployment Care Card at either Central Registration in The Commons in Schweinfurt, or at the Leighton CDC. Cards are good for 10 hours during the month they are issued, and 10 hours for two subsequent months. Unused hours do not roll over.

No-cost care hours can be used at the Schweinfurt CDCs, School Age Services, or with Family Child Care providers in both Schweinfurt and Wuerzburg. In addition to space-available hourly care, parents’ nights out, and SAS special Saturday openings, Schweinfurt CYS plans to offer special openings each month just for Deployment Care Card users.

The Deployment Care Card program will be offered for as long as Schweinfurt is a deployed community. For more information, call Central Registration at 354-6751 or 09721-96-6751.

*Story and photo by Kimberly Gearhart, USAG Schweinfurt Public Affairs*